

SME WEEKLY NEWS

(16 May 2016 – 20 May 2016)

Countries	Highlights
<p>MALAYSIA</p> <p>PM shares Malaysia 'growth story' with UK investors</p>	<p>YAB Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Razak turned into Malaysia's top salesman, sharing Malaysia's "growth story" with dozens of United Kingdom fund managers and foreign direct investors. In fact, some of the questions during the closed-door session, arranged by Bursa Malaysia and Maybank Investment Bank Bhd, focused on Malaysia's economic growth strategies going forward. Looking beyond the country's continuing economic success, the fund managers, who collectively manage funds valued at US\$7.7 trillion (RM31 billion) are keen to know what are the government's plans to support future economic growth. According to some fund managers, Najib's response was quite clear; Malaysia will continue to build capacity, raise productivity, boost SMEs, and develop talent and skills.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: New Straits Times, 17 May 2016)</i></p>
<p>MALAYSIA</p> <p>Malaysia to complete domestic ratification process for TPPA by mid-2017: Mustapa</p>	<p>Malaysia will most likely be able to complete its domestic ratification legal procedures for the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) by mid- 2017 said Minister of International Trade and Industry YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed. On the SMEs which continue to be apprehensive about the TPP, he proposed that TPP countries share with each other the various initiatives they have put in place to get better buy-in SMEs. He also stressed on the need for multi-national corporations (MNCs) to have more programmes to assist SMEs in leveraging on the global value chains and accessing international markets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: New Straits Times, 18 May 2016)</i></p>
<p>MALAYSIA</p> <p>Online businesses with turnover less than RM500k will not be taxed</p>	<p>Online businesses operated by SMEs with a yearly turnover less than RM500,000 need not fear of being taxed, says SME Corp. Malaysia Chief Executive Officer YBhg. Dato' (Dr.) Hafsah Hashim. She said those with a turnover of more than RM500,000 would be taxed but this should not discourage those earning less from striving ahead. She also said that many online businesses were small-time SMEs and new entrepreneurs. Imposing tax will definitely impact those who have just started to conduct online business.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: New Straits Times, 19 May 2016)</i></p>

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<p>THAILAND</p> <p>Banks ready for SME single account scheme</p>	<p>SMEs have more choices in accessing funds from financial institutions after the Government launched the single financial account scheme and the Commercial Collateral Act was passed. There are about 3 million SMEs, but only 700,000-900,000 can get bank loans. The others, especially small businesses, either don't want to bear the tax or don't have enough collateral as requested by the bank. The Revenue Department opened single account registration and reported 400,000 enterprises to apply for the scheme. Under the scheme, SMEs with annual sales of up to Bt500 million that register with the Revenue Department will be exempted from this year. Registered SMEs with registered capital of no more than Bt5 million and annual revenue of Bt30 million or less for the 2015 accounting year will be exempted from tax for the 2016 accounting year.</p> <p><i>(Source: The Nation, 20 May 2016)</i></p>
<p>SINGAPORE</p> <p>OCBC optimistic about growing loans to SMEs</p>	<p>OCBC sees pockets of loan growth even as economic expansion in Singapore and globally moderates, with its head of emerging business expecting a boost from Government-led projects in the areas of infrastructure and healthcare. This also comes as the bank has noticed a discernible shift in attitudes of SMEs in dealing with the manpower crunch - which has been rolled into the broader purpose in Singapore of boosting productivity through technology rather than cheap labour imported from overseas. With the government largely not relenting on quotas on foreign labour, the SMEs are looking at ways to boost workforce efficiency. This shift in attitude has meant SMEs have become keener to tap on Government-led schemes. Among the latest schemes to be rolled out is one known as the Venture Debt Programme, which was officially introduced in January 2016. This scheme, first announced in Budget 2015, applies to companies with accelerated growth - businesses that offer innovative, unique products, with high revenue growth potential.</p> <p><i>(Source: Business Times, 17 May 2016)</i></p>
<p>INDONESIA</p> <p>Training, partnership help prevent data breaches</p>	<p>Indonesia remains the most prone country to hacks and viruses in Southeast Asia, raising the urgency for awareness toward protecting the data of both businesses and consumers. Microsoft Indonesia said that in raising awareness of digital risks and security for consumer and business protection, tech companies could help by partnering with educational institutions to plant ideas. Many SMEs that have worked with Microsoft are gradually showing more interest in fortifying their digital infrastructure, even though the traction is not as much as hoped. Indonesia has a 50% infection rate to malware, the highest in the region, with cybersecurity breaches causing losses of up to Rp 33.29 billion, according to Microsoft data.</p> <p><i>(Source: The Jakarta Post, 17 May 2016)</i></p>

“IT takes tenacity”



If there is a takeaway from the story of Natalie Sit’s rise from administration clerk to CEO of her own company, it is that the way forward in life is to keep learning and improving, and to make the most of the opportunities given.

Sit’s company, Acestar, specialises in providing holistic IT solutions for entities public and private, offering end-to-end services, including servers and storage, network environment, virtualisation, project implementation and management, software solutions, security and technical support.

According to Sit, she believes that by taking care of her team, who in turn takes care of the clients, the business will continue to do well and everyone will benefit.

“In the next three years, I want to participate in more awards which give the company better recognition and maybe even will become a public-listed company,” Sit enthuses, adding that Acestar saw RM21mil turnover last year in 2015.

Source: www.thestar.com.my

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